

# Fighting Obesity in Nevada's Schools

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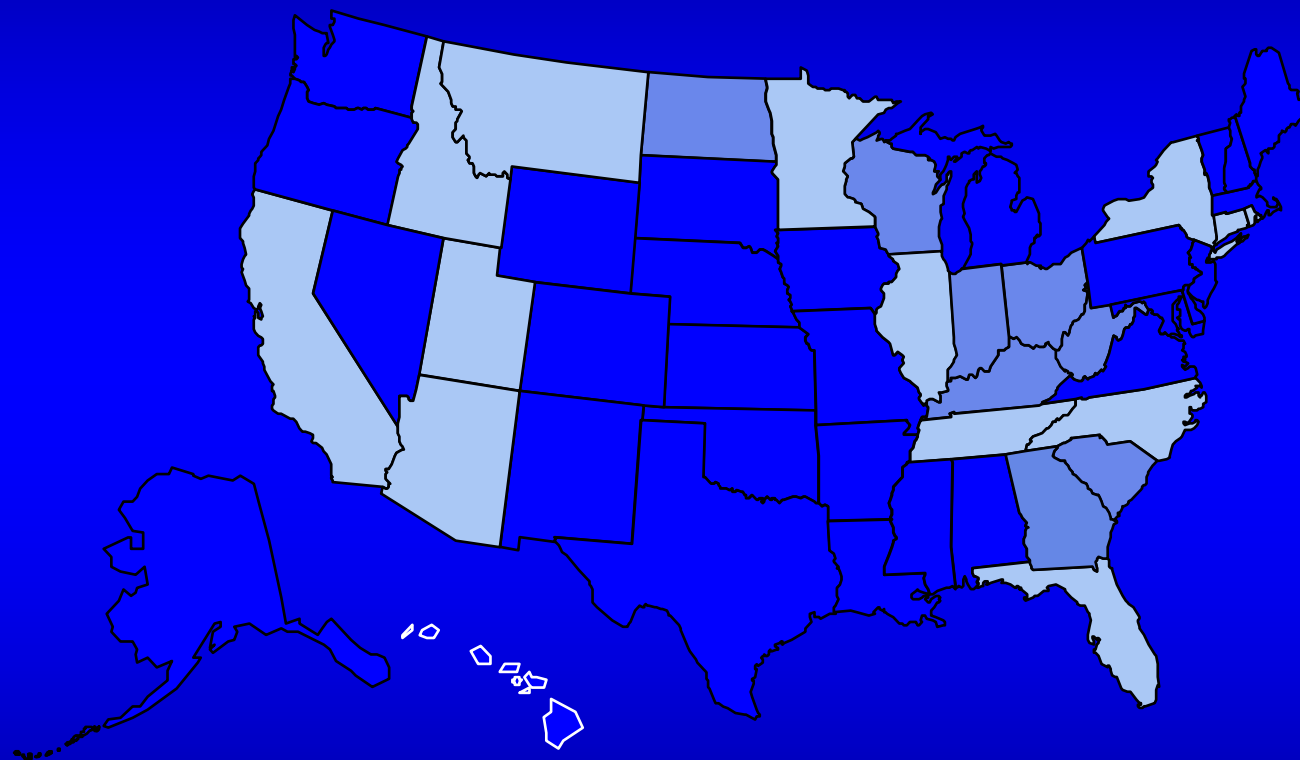
# Obesity Defined

- Too much body fat
- A Body Mass Index of 30 or greater, or about 30 pounds or more overweight
- Extreme obesity is defined as a BMI of 40 or greater

# Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults

## BRFSS, 1985

(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or  $\sim 30$  lbs overweight for 5'4" woman)



Source: Mokdad A H, et al. *J Am Med Assoc* 1999;282:16, 2001;286:10.

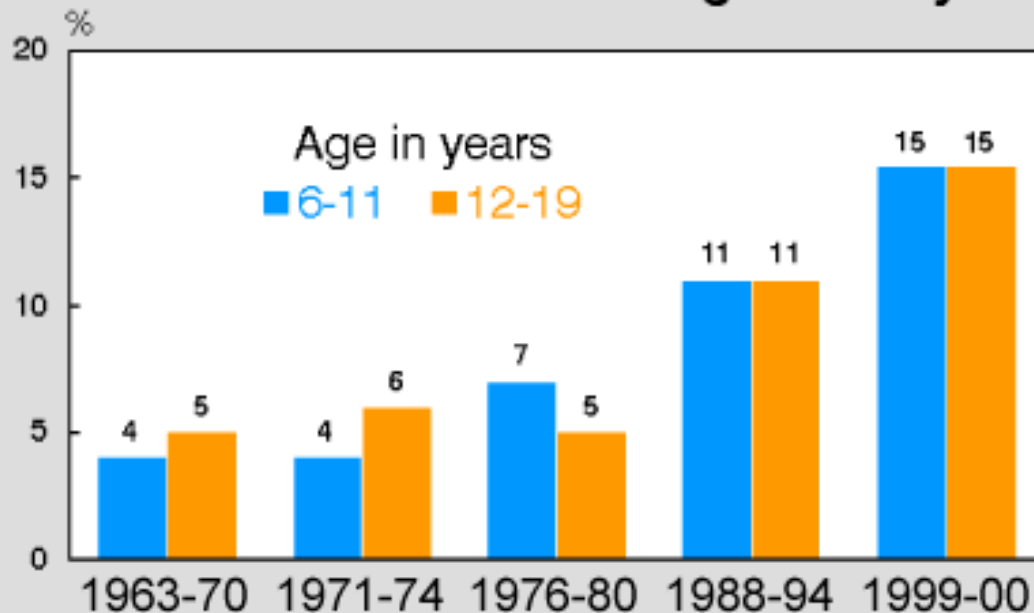
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# An Epidemic Among Children...

**Figure 1. Prevalence of overweight among children and adolescents ages 6-19 years**



NOTES: Excludes pregnant women starting with 1971-74. Pregnancy status not available for 1963-65 and 1966-70. Data for 1963-65 are for children 6-11 years of age; data for 1966-70 are for adolescents 12-17 years of age, not 12-19 years.

SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, NHES and NHANES.

# Overweight Children

- Obese children more likely to become obese adults.
- “The percentage of young people who are overweight has doubled since 1980.”
- “Of children aged 5 to 10 who are overweight, 61% have one or more cardiovascular disease risk factors. . . .”  
(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2000b, p. 5).

# Health Impact

- **Raises blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels**
- **Lowers HDL "good" cholesterol**
- **Raises blood pressure levels**
- **Can induce diabetes; Type 2 diabetes, previously considered an adult disease, has increased tenfold in the past five years.**

# Emotional Impact

- The most immediate consequence of overweight as perceived by the children themselves is social discrimination. This is associated with poor self-esteem and depression.

# **Economic Impact**

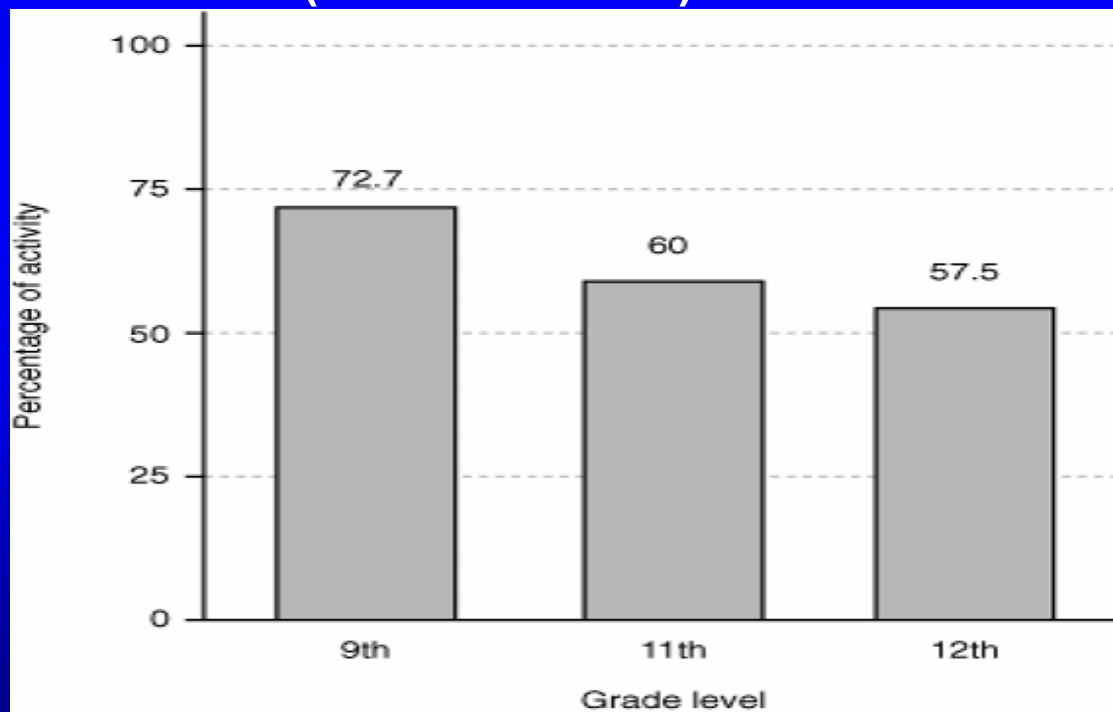
- **Direct medical costs associated with obesity:**
  - \$56 billion in 1995; conservative estimate \$71 billion in 2000.
  - \$126 million for children and adolescents
- **Annual costs for diseases associated with physical inactivity: \$76 billion**

# **Benefits of Physical Activity Children & Adolescents**



# Physical Activity in Decline

- Physical activity levels decrease steadily during adolescence (USDHHS 1996)



Adapted from CDC 1997 (Kann et al. 1998).

# Physical Activity in Decline

- In 2001, 32% of high school students reported attending PE classes Daily. (NYRBS, 2001)
- One recent study found that more than 40% of students did not meet the minimum health-related fitness standards for heart health. (CA Dept. of Ed. 1999)

# Impact of Physical Inactivity

- When physical inactivity is combined with poor diet, the impact on health is devastating, accounting for an estimated 310,000 to 400,000 deaths per year.
- Tobacco use is the only behavior that kills more people.

# Government calls for Increased Physical Activity

- “[The CDC and NIH have called] for more physical activity and physical education for all children. School boards should take note and heed their call. . . Daily, quality physical education in all schools is a sound investment in our nation’s health and productivity.”

Source: *American School Board Journal*, Oct. 2000



# NASBE calls for Increased Physical Activity

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), in its “Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn” policy statements, recommends a:

“sequential physical education curriculum taught daily in every grade . . . that involves . . . physical activity; that teaches knowledge, motor skills, and positive attitudes . . . taught by well-prepared and well-supported staff. . . .

Source: [www.nasbe.org](http://www.nasbe.org)

# **Public Support for Physical Activity in Schools**

- **Harvard Health Forum Survey 2003**
  - **National survey of over 1,000 adults (Lake Snell Perry & Associates)**
  - **92% support more physical activity in schools**
  - **Two thirds believe schools have a role in combating obesity**



# Parental Support for Physical Activity in Schools

- 76% think more school physical education could help control or prevent childhood obesity
- 95% think physical education should be part of a school curriculum for K-12
- 54% believe physical education is as important, or more important than math, science and English

# **American Heart Association Recommendation**

- **Children age 5 and older should:**
  - **participate in at least 30 minutes of enjoyable, moderate-intensity activities every day**
  - **perform at least 30 minutes of vigorous physical activities at least 3-4 days each week for cardiovascular fitness**

# Benefits of Physical Activity

Children and adolescents who are regularly physically active:

- Enhance skeletal development
- Increase muscle and bone strength
- May find it easier to control their weight
- Reduce anxiety and stress

Source: USDHHS 2000a.



# P.E. & Academic Performance

- “Through its effects on mental health, physical activity may help increase students’ capacity for learning” (UDDHHS 2000b).
- “. . . Spending more time in physical education did not have harmful effects on the standardized achievement scores of elementary school students” (Sallis et al. 1999).
- “In fact . . . participation in a two-year health-related physical education program had several significant favorable effects on academic achievement” (Sallis et al. 1999).



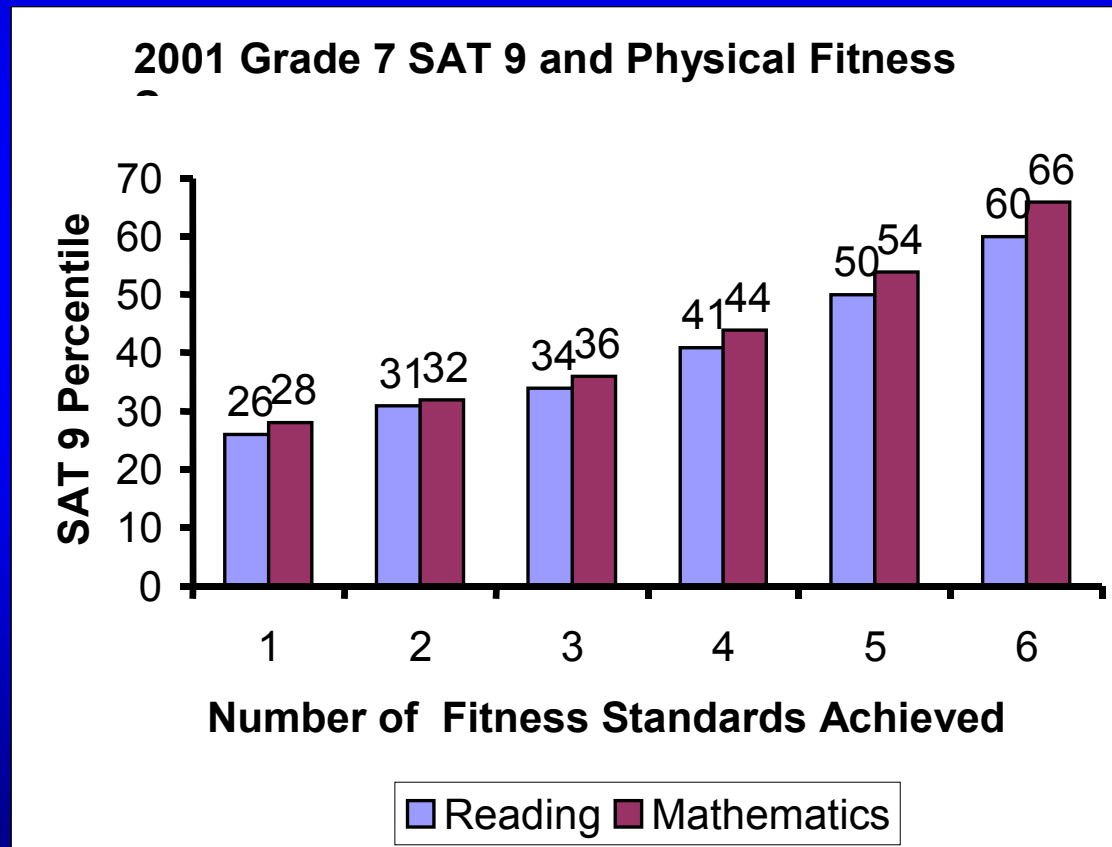


# California BOE Study 2002



- Reading and mathematics scores were matched with fitness scores
- 353,000 fifth graders, 322,000 seventh graders, and 279,000 ninth graders

# California BOE Study



# Quality PE Program

Kids who increased their physical activity from three to five days a week showed

- 20% improvement in school attendance
- 20% improvement in school grades
- 50% reduction in smoking
- 60% reduction in drug and alcohol use

*Source: Collingwood 2001*

# Physical Activity is Priceless: Yet the Price can be Low



# Quality Physical Education / Physical Activity Doesn't Need to:

- Cost money
- Be conducted in a continuous 30 minute block
- Hurt



# No/Low Cost Activities

- Integrated Activities (10 or 15 minute blocks of time)
- Walking Programs
- Classroom Exercises
  - Stretching
  - Dance
  - Relaxation



# **Leadership**

**Health Coordinators for each School District in Nevada. Coordinator:**

- Develops curriculum for physical activity**
- Promotes physical activity among schools in district**
- Ensures nutrition and tobacco education programs are available**
- Engages parents in providing healthy environments for kids at home.**

# Additional Resources

- Program Examples: Healthy Maine Partnership; Be Active Minnesota
- [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) and [ncsl.org/programs/health/health.htm](http://ncsl.org/programs/health/health.htm)
- Health Organization partners such as:
  - American Heart Association
  - American Cancer Society
  - Nevada Diabetes Association
  - Arthritis Foundation

# **The American Heart Association Urges the Nevada State Board of Education to:**

- **Strongly urge school districts to provide 30 minutes per day of structured moderate to vigorous physical activity for children in Grades K-12.**
- **Develop policy requiring schools currently conducting PE courses to include 30 minutes per day of vigorous physical activity in Grades K-12.**

## **AHA recommendation, cont.**

**Encourage all schools to conduct simple fitness and behavior assessments at least once during the school year, to include:**

- Health related / Cardiovascular fitness test**
- Body Mass Index Measures**

**Provide results to the Nevada State Board of Education and to parents.**